

Office of the Governor

**STATE OF WYOMING
EXECUTIVE DEPARTMENT
EXECUTIVE ORDER**

**Order 2017-2
(Supplements 2015-4)**

SUPPLEMENT TO GREATER SAGE-GROUSE SUITABLE HABITAT DEFINITIONS

WHEREAS, the Greater sage-grouse uses a variety of habitats, some of which are defined as suitable habitat under Attachment F to Executive Order 2015-4, Greater Sage-Grouse Core Area Protection;

WHEREAS, Attachment F defines three types of suitable habitat, one of which is “riparian, wet meadow (native or introduced) or areas of alfalfa or other suitable forbs (brood rearing habitat) within 275 meters of sagebrush habitat with 5% or greater sagebrush canopy cover (for roosting/loafing);”

WHEREAS, the areas of these habitats beyond the 275 meter limitation have been classified as disturbed under Attachment F and count towards the 5% disturbance threshold in Executive Order 2015-4;

WHEREAS, the Greater sage-grouse is known to use portions of these areas beyond the 275 meter distance limitation for suitable habitat;

WHEREAS, the areas beyond the 275 meter distance limitation for this kind of habitat should be reclassified, on a case-by-case basis, from disturbed to suitable habitat, if it can be shown through defensible data that the Greater sage-grouse use the areas considered for reclassification;

WHEREAS, wetlands and irrigated riparian meadows in stream and river valleys should be treated differently from the types of habitats discussed above because they can support the species and do not affect the species in the same manner as other manmade disturbances;

WHEREAS, wetlands and irrigated riparian meadows along stream and river valleys should be reclassified from disturbed to suitable habitat for Density/Disturbance Calculation Tool purposes; and

WHEREAS, wetlands and irrigated riparian meadows along stream and river valleys may be considered suitable habitat for conservation credit purposes, if it can be shown through defensible data that the Greater sage-grouse use the areas.

NOW, THEREFORE, pursuant to the authority vested in me by the Constitution and Laws of the State, I, Matthew H. Mead, Governor of the State of Wyoming, do hereby issue this Executive Order providing as follows:

1. The Executive Order 2015-4, Attachment F definition of suitable habitat for “riparian, wet meadow (native or introduced) or areas of alfalfa or other suitable forbs (brood rearing habitat) within 275 meters of sagebrush habitat with 5% or greater sagebrush canopy cover (for roosting/loafing)” is hereby supplemented to include areas of these habitats further than 275 meters from sagebrush where it has been proven through pellet counts, documented sightings or other defensible proof that sage-grouse use the area.
2. Executive Order 2015-4, Attachment F is hereby supplemented to include a definition for Wetlands and Irrigated Riparian Meadows. Wetlands and Irrigated Riparian Meadows are natural and manmade wetlands, and historically (pre August 1, 2008) irrigated areas in stream and river valleys. Wetlands and Irrigated Riparian Meadows are considered suitable habitat for Density/Disturbance Calculation Tool (DDCT) purposes. Wetlands and Irrigated Riparian Meadows may be considered suitable habitat for conservation credit purposes if they meet the definition of suitable habitat in Attachment F of Executive Order 2015-4, as supplemented above by this Executive Order.

This Executive Order shall become effective upon signing and shall remain effective until Executive Order 2015-4, including this supplement, is amended or revoked.

Given under my hand and the Executive Seal of the State of Wyoming this 10 day of July, 2017.



Matthew H. Mead
Governor